

Section 3: The More at Four Child

A. More at Four Child Enrollment Eligibility

Children served in a More at Four slot must meet age requirements, income eligibility, or eligibility for children in military families, and service priority criteria as defined in this section.

Age Requirements

1. Children to be enrolled must be four years of age on or before **August 31st** of the program year.
2. Children age eligible for kindergarten cannot be served with More at Four funds.

Eligibility for Families at or below 75% of State Median Income (SMI)

Eligibility for More at Four is determined by family size and gross income. **Children in families with annual incomes at or below 75% of the State Median Income (SMI) level are eligible for More at Four services** (see Table 1).

Table 1. 75 PERCENT STATE MEDIAN INCOME*	
Family Size	75 Percent State Median Income
1	\$22,709
2	\$29,696
3	\$36,683
4	\$43,670
5	\$50,657
6	\$57,645
7	\$58,955
8	\$60,265
9	\$61,575
10	\$62,885
11	\$64,195
12	\$65,505

*Based on August 1, 2007 North Carolina Subsidized Child Care Eligibility Limits

Eligibility for Families above 75% of State Median Income (SMI)

When a family's gross income exceeds 75% of the State Median Income (SMI) the child is deemed eligible if they meet at least one of the criteria listed below:

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as indicated by the family and/or child speaking limited or no English in the home;

- Identified Disability as indicated by the child having a current Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- Chronic Health Condition as indicated by a health care provider diagnosis; e.g., asthma, childhood obesity, sickle cell anemia, cancer, HIV;
- Developmental/Educational Need as indicated by the child performance results on a developmental screen.

Up to 20% of a county's/region's More at Four slots may be filled by children above the 75% of State Median Income level if a child meets at least one of the criteria listed above.

Eligibility for Children in Military Families

A child is eligible for More at Four if at least one parent or legal guardian of this child is an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard) or the North Carolina National Guard or other state military force, or a Reserve Unit of the armed forces who is ordered to active duty by the proper authority within the last 18 months or expected to be ordered within the next 18 months. A child whose parent or legal guardian has been seriously injured or killed while on active duty is also eligible.

Military eligible children are not counted in the county's allowable percentage of slots serving children over 75% of State Median Income.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Maintenance of Effort (TANF MOE)

When a child is determined eligible for services, a % of poverty category must be determined (see Table 2), entered on the **Eligibility/Enrollment Scorecard** sheet and in MAFKids. **This information will be used to determine TANF MOE.**

Table 2. INCOME ELIGIBILITY LEVELS*					
<i>(More at Four, 2008-2009)</i>					
Family Size	130%	185%	200%	250%	300%
1	\$13,520	\$19,240	\$20,800	\$26,000	\$31,200
2	\$18,200	\$25,900	\$28,000	\$35,000	\$42,000
3	\$22,880	\$32,560	\$35,200	\$44,000	\$52,800
4	\$27,560	\$39,220	\$42,400	\$53,000	\$63,600
5	\$32,240	\$45,880	\$49,600	\$62,000	\$74,400
6	\$36,920	\$52,540	\$56,800	\$71,000	\$85,200
7	\$41,600	\$59,200	\$64,000	\$80,000	\$96,000
8	\$46,280	\$65,860	\$71,200	\$89,000	\$106,800
9	\$50,960	\$72,520	\$78,400	\$98,000	\$117,600
10	\$55,640	\$79,180	\$85,600	\$107,000	\$128,400
11	\$60,320	\$85,840	\$92,800	\$116,000	\$139,200
12	\$65,000	\$92,500	\$100,000	\$125,000	\$150,000
*Based on 2008 Federal Poverty Levels (rev. 02-12-08)					

B. Service Priority Status

After a pool of eligible children is determined, **service priority status** (served vs. unserved) should be used to prioritize those children for More at Four services.

1. Unserved Children

- a. Children who have **never** been served in any preschool or child care setting.
- b. Children who are **currently unserved** (previously in preschool or child care setting).
- c. Children served for 5 months or less in the year prior to service in the More at Four program in any preschool or child care setting.

2. Underserved Children

- a. Children who are in unregulated child care that does not meet the More at Four Pre-K standards.
- b. Children who are in a regulated preschool or child care setting, but are not receiving subsidy.
- c. Other children, including those in pre-kindergartens or child care settings that do not meet More at Four program standards. This is the last resort and documentation that children who fit the unserved category were diligently recruited should be available.

Exception: More at Four Pre-K slots designated to a site can be used to serve that site's three-year-old children when they become age eligible for More at Four and meet More at Four eligibility requirements. However, the total number of slots used to maintain services for previously served three-year-old children may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of a county's slots.

Children with Disabilities

More at Four programs are encouraged to be inclusive. The value of inclusive settings ensures that each child's strengths, unique learning needs, and abilities are addressed.

Public schools are required by federal law to provide special education to eligible 4-year-olds. More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Programs (regardless of the setting) and public schools will collaborate in the development and implementation of a child's IEP (Individualized Education Program).

More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Eligibility/Enrollment Scorecard
(REVISED; Effective March 12, 2008)

Date Completed: _____
 Child's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: () _____

STEP ONE: Eligibility Factors

- 1) Will the child be four years of age on or before **August 31st** of the program year?
 ___ **No (Child not eligible; discontinue scorecard.)**
 ___ **Yes (Move to question 2.)**

- 2) What is the annual family gross income? _____ What is the family size? _____

- 3) Does the family's income fall at or below 75% of the State Median Income (SMI)?
 ___ **No (Complete table A and B and move to question 4.)**
 ___ **Yes (Child is eligible; complete tables A and B; THEN determine priority.)**

- 4) Are there one or more yes boxes checked in Table A?
 ___ **No (Child not eligible; discontinue scorecard)**
 ___ **Yes (Child is eligible; determine priority)**
 - No more than 20% of a county's/region's More at Four slots may be filled with children from families with incomes above the 75% of State Median Income level if a child meets at least one of the criteria listed in Table A.
 - Children meeting military eligibility are excluded from the 20% percentage.

TABLE A		
Check one box for each:	Yes	No
Child of eligible military family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limited English Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identified Disability (IEP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic Health Condition(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental/Educational Need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TABLE B (TANF/MOE only)		Check one
130% of poverty and below		
131 - 185% of poverty		
186 - 200% of poverty		
201 - 250% of poverty		
251 - 300% of poverty		
Above 300% of poverty		

STEP TWO: Service Priority Status (Circle only one.)

UNSERVED		UNDERSERVED	
1a. Child has never been served in any preschool or child care setting.		2a. Child in unregulated care ; does not meet More at Four standards .	
1b. Child currently unserved .		2b. Child in regulated preschool or child care, not receiving subsidy.	
1c. Child served for 5 months or less in the year prior to service in the More at Four program in any preschool or child care setting.		2c. Child currently being served in settings that do <u>not</u> meet More at Four program standards.	
		Exception: Eligible 3-year-old child moving up to fill a MAF slot.; 50% county limit.	

C. Definitions and Recommended Documentation for Verification

During the application process, at a minimum, the following elements and appropriate documentation identified in the chart below must be collected for each child and family. This information will serve two purposes: (1) to determine More at Four eligibility, and (2) to determine TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) for the state to determine TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) contributions.

Element	Parent, guardian or caregiver statement substantiated by parent, guardian or caregiver signature is required for income, military status, family size, and kinship.
Child's Name	Parent, guardian or caregiver statement.
Birth Date	Child's birth certificate, or medical records, or recorded in Family Bible
Child's SS #	Verification of child's social security number, if applicable
County	County of child's residence as documented on child's application.
Family Income (To convert weekly income to annual, multiply weekly by 4.3 to obtain monthly, then by 12 for annual.)	Count parent or stepparent's regular gross income (signature required). Regular gross income may include income earned through sales commissions averaged over several months, regular employment through a temporary employment agency, child support, alimony payments, and workman's compensation. Excluded from regular gross income are parent, stepparent and child Supplemental Security Income, adoptive assistance, foster care payments, and irregular income (e.g., over-time, temporary unemployment pay, Work First, Food Stamps, student loans). If legal guardian, legal custodian, or other caregiver, only count the child's income, including Social Security Income and Child Support Payments. Do not count Supplemental Security Income. Count income from any <u>minor</u> siblings living in the home.
Military Status	Parent, guardian or caregiver statement (signature required).
Family Size (signature required) (Number in Family: parents, stepparents, all siblings)	Include the following individuals living in the child's home: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The More at Four child plus all minor brothers and sisters, half brothers, half sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters. 2. Parents and stepparents of these children. 3. Incarcerated or institutionalized individuals are <u>not</u> included. 4. If a child is living with a relative like a grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc., or an individual who has <u>legal custody</u> or <u>legal guardianship</u>, then the family size consists of the More at Four child, plus all minor brothers and sisters, half brothers, half sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters living in the same household. The adults are <u>not</u> included, nor are the children of these adults counted.
Kinship (signature required)	Kinship is established when the child in care lives with an adult blood relative or with a non-relative who has legal custody or guardianship. If child is living with non-relatives or other adults that have legal custody or guardianship, guardian must present a <u>legal document</u> verifying they have <u>legal custody</u> or <u>guardianship</u> . <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A parent - This includes a natural mother or father, a legal father, or adoptive parent(s) after issuance of the final order of adoption. 2. An alleged father or other alleged paternal relative. 3. A blood or half-blood relative or adoptive relative limited to: brother, sister, grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, uncle or aunt, great-uncle or aunt, great-great-uncle or aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin. 4. A step relative limited to: stepparent, stepbrother, and stepsister. 5. Spouses of anyone in the above groups, even after the marriage has been terminated by death or divorce. 6. Other adults who have legal custody or guardianship of a child. Foster parents do not have legal custody or guardianship; custody remains with the Department of Social Services.

D. Children with Challenging Behaviors

In special cases where a child may appear **chronically disruptive** or **harmful** to him/herself or others, administrators, teachers, and parents must work together to develop a plan to support the family and child's placement in the More at Four program.

More at Four programs should make every effort to maintain a child's enrollment and **participation**. Local programs must seek guidance and access any and all resources available to the child and his/her family to support the More at Four placement, including consulting with the State More at Four Office.

If it becomes necessary to find another placement for a child, the More at Four State Program must be notified in writing.

See: <http://www.osr.nc.gov> CLICK ON: More at Four Pre-Kindergarten; Manuals; Program Guidelines and Requirements (Supplemental Materials); Procedures Regarding Children with Challenging Behaviors.